

London Film-makers Co-operative.

Festival Programming Report (Draft for AGM April '79)

There are two types of international film event: a) International and local events (in terms of the work shown) such as Knokke or Film London brought about by the efforts of film-makers and viewers in order that they may see new work and by the need for an ongoing discussion between film-makers and their audience. b) The commercial festivals (Cannes on one extreme and Edinburgh on the other) whose reasons for existence are that they function as a market-place for the film industry whilst offering token patronage to alternate cinema/film by staging concurrent secondary events - ie the Jungen Forum in Berlin.

Both types of event also, of course, operate as prestige displays for their location and funding bodies.

Selection :

- a) there is no problem here, the organisers are familiar with current work and are prepared to view for selection
- b) the problem are is here, festival organisers are (generally) none too familiar with new work and so, if programming themselves, tend to opt for familiar work by well established film-makers or, alternatly, they try to delegate selection to the Co-op which has to be refused as it is contrary to our constitution (ie non-selectivity). In the event of being turned down by the Co-op they either leave it there (lost oppertunity) or approach an individual.

We must therefore ask ourselves two questions: a) Should initiative always be encouraged on the part of the organiser/s as to the selection of films shown at a festival? or b) Should the appointment of a programmer/s to organise each major show come from within the Co-op's democratic structure?

Given the drawbacks of 'a' as being; Loss of interest on the part of the organiser/s, The organiser/s being unable or unwilling to view films for selection, Control of exhibition being removed from the film-makers. The simplest and most effective solution, from within the Co-op, would be the setting up of a mechanism for dealing with the solicitation of major venues and the selection of a programmer/s for each event where the organiser/s are unable or unwilling to make their own choise.

The following system is proposed:

A General Meeting elects a group of four or five interested persons (ie film-makers) with experience in dealing with international events to consult on the selection of programmer/s for each event. This group would also provide back-up information, from their own experiences, in the case of relatively inexperienced programmers.

The Co-op co-ordinator (supposing that there is one) would collate information on each event well ahead of time (through the British Council, Film-makers Europe etc) and keep the membership informed (via Co-op mailings or the proposed journal) of forth coming events.

Any member interested in programming or helping to programme an event would then contact the co-ordinator by a set date

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A meeting would then be arranged between the monitoring group and the (self-nominated) potential programmers. Selection of a programmer, or programmers, for each event should be by consensus - a decision on the part of the monitoring group should only be used in the case of a deadlock.

Every effort should be made to place a member of the monitoring group on the National Film Festival Panel.

Programmers would be paid for their time by the festival concerned according to its means.

Wherever possible festivals should pay rentals on the normal co-op basis. (In cases where the festival is poor (financially) but deemed a worthy cause, rentals, travel and accommodation can be negotiated between the programmer and the festival, provided that this meets with the approval of the film-makers represented. In these instances a set fee (time based) should be charged by the Co-op to off-set programming and handling costs).

All major events provide film-makers & programmers with travel, accommodation and a small daily allowance if they attend. (All foreign Co-op bookings must be accompanied by at least one responsible person).

Above all it is important that ~~xxxxxx~~ selections presented at festivals are seen to be the choice of individuals within the Co-op and not as 'official' Co-op selections.